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AN ABSTRACT
of
A PLAN
for the
ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION
of
LUTHERAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL LIBRARIES

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The present conditions of the schools of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod were determined by a questionnaire survey. Nearly 100% of the Atlantic District schools were sampled, as well as 10% of the schools outside the Atlantic District of the Missouri Synod. Approximately 90% of the 195 questionnaires sent out were returned giving decisive information regarding the size of library collections and the most popular methods of organization and administration in the many areas of library service. The survey indicated that Lutheran elementary schools have far to go to meet accepted standards for their libraries.

Standards for elementary school libraries are formulated by three agencies: (1) state departments of education; (2) the five regional accrediting agencies for secondary schools and colleges; and (3) at the national level by the American Association of School Librarians, a division of both the American Library Association and the National Education Association. Few state or regional accrediting associations recommend greater quantitative standards than those published by the American Association of School Librarians in 1960. The goals set for Lutheran school libraries are also comparable to those of the American Association of

School Librarians.

Recent teaching trends, textbook formats, and the lack of variety of religious materials at public libraries have become the most important reasons for establishing libraries in Lutheran schools as centers of enrichment and self-directed learning.

Lutheran school faculties have shown considerable initiative and creativity in their search for ways to provide library services for their students. Library experience and financial support are needed in greater proportions.

The survey showed that a considerable number of schools have appointed a librarian. In addition, a good number of these librarians have had the good sense to organize their schools' collections according to the Dewey Decimal system of classification. This system of classification is the most efficient method of providing adequate instruction for their pupils at a time when library research is being emphasized in the general elementary curriculum.

Because of a variety of circumstances among Lutheran schools, many details of library organization must be left to those who are best acquainted with local situations. The need for properly functioning libraries organized by the simplest possible methods is constantly stressed. Nevertheless, there is no way out in many areas of library work. Only time, effort, study, and experience will solve many of the problems involved.

And what of the future? The superintendents of par-

ish education are now encouraging all Lutheran schools to meet common standards. To accomplish this feat in the field of library services many superintendents may hire qualified traveling librarians. These librarians would provide the education and experience needed to set up the school libraries within a district. This practice would hopefully parallel the recent trend toward consolidated public school library services in order to eliminate duplication of effort among small school librarians. It certainly would be a great blessing to the libraries of Lutheran elementary schools.